

My Sholaga shikaris told me that a wild dog separated from its mate would occasionally make the noise described. This is possibly correct, as there was evidence of a bitch (and cubs I think) some way off. The dog had approached a live bait (a goat) tied up for a panther at dusk, and had been driven off with stones flung from the machan!

HONNAMETTI ESTATE,
ATTIKAN, P.O.,
VIA MYSORE,
SOUTH INDIA,
January 17, 1953.

RANDOLPH C. MORRIS

4. WILD DOGS

The following is an extract from page 44 of the book 'Out of the Burma Night' (Hukawng Valley trek, 1942), by Capt. R. H. Gribble of the Burma Frontier Service, and it is quoted here as being likely to have some bearing on the subject of possible varieties of 'wild dog' existing in Burma; one cited as being 'black and white' by the writer of 'Jungle Memories' in the *Journal* of December 1949—with reference to a 'gray' one seen by himself; another, 'dark gray' as seen by myself in Burma, and about a dozen 'piebald' ones seen on the borders of Nepal and discussed under 'The Burma Wild Dog and Other Matters Canine' in the *Journal* of August 1950. The note that follows this extract is from my own recent experience in the Nilgiris, below the plateau.

'I was glad to halt again at Shaduzup' (about 40 miles west of Myitkyina, N. Burma). . . . this cheerful forest village, at the foot of which was a deep pool into which I slipped at every opportunity. . . . I happened to be sitting half in and half out of the water when I saw the head of an animal snarling at me from the opposite bank. As I watched I saw other creatures of the same kind moving in the undergrowth. Brindled in colour with long snout and tail I recognized them as a pack of wild hunting dog. Presently the dogs gathered in a bunch. They would raise their heads and bare their teeth. I called to my Kachin bearer to bring my gun from the rest-house just behind me, but by the time Ningu Nawng arrived with the gun, the dogs were moving along the bank on the other side and were out of range, and soon out of sight. Ningu told me that these ferocious dogs were terribly destructive, so much so that village livestock had to be carefully shut up each night under the houses. Woe betide any domestic animal that happened to get locked out at night.'

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2. One morning in last September I was sitting at the foot of the northern escarpment of the Nilgiri plateau, just above an old disused bridle-track that runs parallel with the lower contours and which is sometimes walked by a tiger. None had traversed it during the previous night, but the morning was cool and breezy under large white clouds; the wind, though shifty, was blowing for most of the time across the track towards me and up the slopes behind. My

position gave me command of about 300 yards of track in one direction, where it disappeared around an outcrop of rocks.

It was while I was looking directly across the track below, that a strange reddish animal suddenly appeared from behind a bush beyond—about 20 yards from me—and, instantly spotting me, quickly turned about and vanished, without revealing its hindquarters and tail. I believe I was actually looking at that bush when this red dog-like animal appeared, or—if anything—only my eyes had moved at that moment of mutual detection, and I clearly saw its head and forward part of its body for perhaps three seconds. The impression received was that of a 'lean and leggy' wild dog, about three quarters grown, but I did not note the colour of its muzzle. That which particularly caught my attention during those few moments was the general hyaena-like appearance of the whole head (though not large), the high, but not wide, forehead between the rounded tops of erect ears with their alert forward cast and the comparatively short, slightly 'upturned' muzzle, the typically 'stupid' expression of the face with its seemingly prominent eyes and their 'short-sighted' stare.

Perhaps five minutes later, this same animal—or one exactly like it in colour, size and built—appeared on the track about 150 yards away and, without glancing back towards me, trotted along it; followed almost immediately, one after the other, by two large, 'tawny' animals resembling Alsatian dogs, and which behaved precisely as the first—the three trotting away 'tiredly' in single-file, the red one leading and now clearly dog-like in shape and gait. It was only when they disappeared behind the outcrop of rocks that I remembered I had a rifle on my lap, loaded and safety-catch off. Following up, a few minutes later, I found footprints of only 'dogs'—none as large as those of hyaena or wolf—which, a short distance beyond the rocks, disappeared on hard, gritty ground; nor could I discover where they had turned off the path, for there were no prints on better tracking ground further ahead.

While wild dogs are fairly common in that locality for practically the whole year round, wolves—and even jackals—are unknown there; and I doubt that hard conditions elsewhere would cause wolves to pass the natural barriers which border that strip of jungle on all sides; and in my opinion, the two larger animals were too heavily built and shaggy to be wolves. Though I forgot my rifle till too late, I did blow on an empty cartridge—and, later, on a blade of grass—as soon as the last animal disappeared, but without causing any of these strange-looking animals to re-appear. However, whatever might have been the identity of the two larger animals, what was that of the smaller, red one? If wild dog, why was it being so closely followed by the other pair, and why had all three the appearance and gait of weariness? (I did not notice lolling tongues, and at the first appearance of the red one it was not panting). Domestic dogs or village pariahs, never venture far into that jungle unaccompanied by human beings.

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Postscript (30-12-1952): On Xmas Day after the above account had been sent to you, a friend from Kotagiri, who owns a couple of Alsatis, happened to mention a 'pack of Alsatis' maintained on an estate at (or near) Kil-Kotagiri as watch-dogs and for which

purpose they were allowed to 'run wild' over the estate, hunting and running down wild game for their food—presumably wild deer, etc. that raided into the property. It was on hearing this that I was reminded of having heard, on several occasions during previous years, of a similar version about this 'pack of Alsations' in the vicinity of Kotagiri; and, though the spot in the jungle (open tree and bush) where I saw the trio would be fifteen miles or more in a straight line from Kil-Kotagiri; it now seems reasonable to assume that the two larger animals were indeed Alsatian dogs (males) following a wild dog bitch which was in season.

If such an assumption is correct, and that mating had occurred and a litter of puppies will result therefrom, then what may the behaviour of the offspring of such an union be towards human beings encountered in the jungle when the cross-bred animals run with a pack of wild dogs?

'GLENCAIRN',
HOBART ROAD,
OOTACAMUND,
December 14, 1952.

K. BOSWELL,
Capt., I.A.M.C. (Retd.)

5. REMARKABLE BEHAVIOUR OF A COW

A few days ago, in the midst of a busy Bombay locality (Magazine Street, Darukhana) I witnessed one of the usual dog fights for the possession of a bitch. The larger one, a strong black street dog, was getting the upper hand over his rival. At this point, the two fighters were joined by a cow, which appeared on the scene from nowhere and began to separate the fighting dogs. The cow made a mild charge, head down, pushing the dogs about with her nose and rolling them over and over. She finally succeeded in separating the fighters. No sooner was this done, the big fellow threatened to thrust himself upon the small dog again. It was only then that the cow made a determined charge against the big bully. There was no doubt that the cow meant business: she attacked the dog with her horns and threw him clean over, whereupon the bully quit, but not without being pursued and chased for another 100 yards or so by the infuriated cow, who took up a position in the middle of the road till the dog had disappeared around the corner. This incident was watched by a large crowd.

'BAITUL SURUR',
WARDEN ROAD,
BOMBAY,
March 3, 1953.

F. R. GOLDSCHMIDT, D.Sc.

6. RED PORCUPINES

With reference to Miscellaneous Note No. 9 in the *Journal*, Vol. 50 (4), earlier this month I came on two red-quilled porcupines on a road on these Hills (the Billigirirangans; Coimbatore District) while driving in the evening—the first coloured porcupines I have seen.